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ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

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January 6, 1999

The Honorable Madeleine K. Albright  
Secretary of State  
Department of State  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

Sources close to the American Embassy in Bogota have informed me that officials at the US Embassy solicited silence from the Colombian National Police (CNP) regarding a 7 ½ ton cocaine seizure, destined for Cuba, because it could hurt our budding relationship with the Western Hemisphere's only surviving dictatorship.

The Clinton Administration has made the announcement that it is going to relax some of the restrictions on the Cuban embargo. It is only logical to conclude the reason there has been no official reaction from the State Department on the seizure is that State did not want the air of coddling a ruthless dictator to be muddled by allegations of drug trafficking.

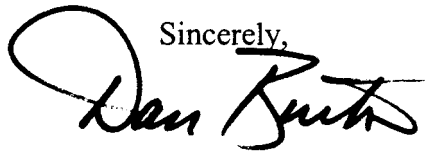
This was a very large seizure by our drug war allies, the CNP. They should be praised for their efforts and successes. It is hypocritical at best for the State Department to be sending them mixed signals regarding their heroic efforts in stopping the flow of illegal narcotics to American streets and school yards. More than 4,000 brave CNP officers have died fighting our war on drugs in the last nine years. It is unconscionable to think that the State Department would disgrace their memories and the memories of every American police officer who has given the ultimate sacrifice fighting this deadly scourge by soliciting silence in the name of back-door diplomacy.

I would like the State Department to investigate this matter in a timely manner (hopefully the investigation will be completed more quickly than the delivery of the 12 upgraded Huey helicopters then-Secretary **Gelbard** promised myself and Chairman **Gilman** in September, 1996 -- yet to be delivered some 2 ½ years later).

This is an outrage and, if true, is completely unjustifiable. I want to know the facts surrounding this matter as soon as possible. If I do not get a satisfactory answer to my inquiry by the time Congress returns to session in two weeks, I will initiate a Congressional inquiry.

The Honorable Madeleine K. Albright  
January 6, 1999  
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Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or Kevin Long, 225-4068, of my committee staff.

Sincerely,  
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Burton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a stylized "B".

Dan Burton  
Chairman